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## APARTMENT HOUSES.

A LONDON paper recently indulged in a comparison between American flats and those of Continental Europe, and in raising an objection to the former indulged a criticism that was frivolous in the extreme, and made its argument so strong upon that particular fault (?) as to lose sight entirely of the most objectionable and damaging feature in our apartment houses. The claim our London contemporary made was that the European flats were built with an outward aspect of splendor and grandeur; palatial in their pretensions and stupendous in their construction. It conceded the conveniences we possess in running-water, gas, steam-heating, automatically opening front doors, and the multitude of excellent improvements our enterprising and far-seeing architects have made, but our exteriors—they were sufficient to offset the advantages gained in other directions, and place us upon a lower plane than the French or Germans.

For a people like the French, whose life contains so strong an element of display, and whose aim is to possess the finest palaces and flower-

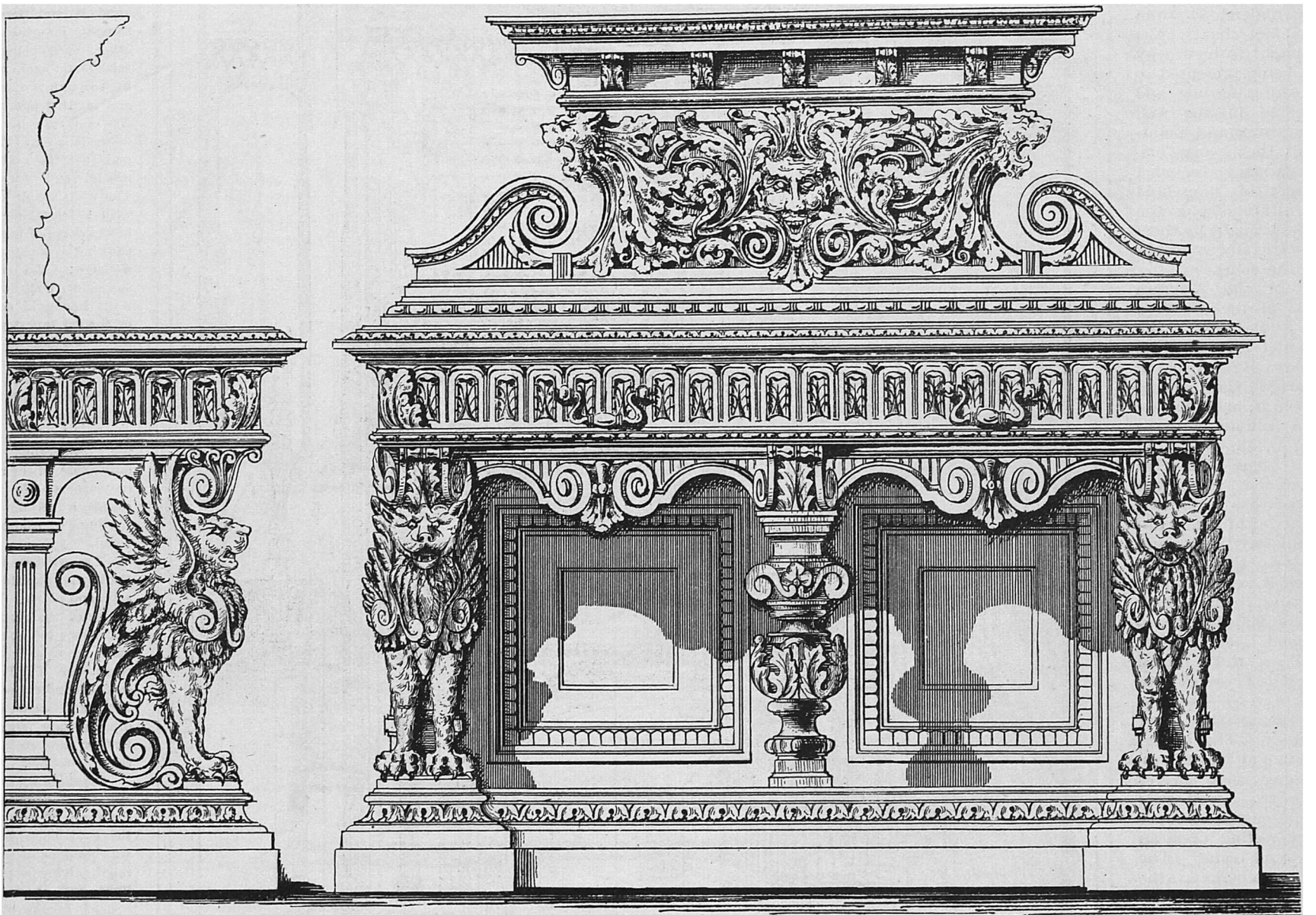
exceptional woman, or an exceptional man either, as for that, who could clamber down one of those rickety affairs from the eighth story, and reach the ground in safety; and then what would be done if there was a child to carry, or two! Builders should be compelled to put up fire-escapes that are as accessible as the stairs, and as readily mounted or descended, the facilities such would afford burglars is rubbish, and not to be compared to the safety of a hundred persons from an awful sacrifice. The well-hole and elevator-way should be made fire-proof; they are the highways through which death travels so swiftly to every room as to make escape almost impossible. There is a very simple contrivance by which elevator shafts may be closed at any time and which closes them mechanically after the car has passed each landing, and in all shafts similar trap doors could be easily arranged to automatically close as soon as a certain amount of heat was developed in any part of the shaft, and thus stop the draught of air that carries the flames through the upper stories. Why are not these improvements, or some like them, adopted? Simply because they incur a little more expense, and the builder saves a few dollars at the risk of his tenants.

red ware substitute; but more frequently his ablutions were performed at the pump.

Then in china, common white earthenware, or at most with blue edges in coffee and tea-cups only, was known, while in dinner ware only a very common description had succeeded pewter plates, and this not entirely.

Now what do we see in every decent home? A good tumbler, a caraffe, a wine glass, even a glass water-jug, and white and gold china at least—often a best set, even in an artisan's home—a dinner set of a good printed pattern, and scarcely a house but some pretty—sometimes showy—glass or china ornament decks the chimney-piece or buffet. Thus we see how the luxury of the rich has reached in some degree to the poorest of our citizens. While we trace this in our own trade, how might it also be multiplied by nearly every other manufacturing trade in this country.—*Pottery Gazette*.

**Ornamentation for Silk**, designed to take the place of painting with those who have the taste and disposition but lack the artistic ability to use pigments, is somewhat in the shape of decalcomanie, but much more lasting and effective. Very rich and handsome patterns are printed with a peculiar ink upon a prepared paper and sold by the package. We believe that all that is necessary is to dampen the paper after laying it upon the silk or satin to be ornamented, and passing over it a heated iron. The ornament



HALL TABLE IN CARVED OAK. DESIGNED AND MADE BY MESSRS. HERTS BROTHERS, NEW YORK CITY.

beds of the world, our plain exteriors may not suffice, but we warrant for the average common-sense American—and such the average American is—the super-abundance of indoor desirabilities is a most acceptable substitute for the lack of display without. We have no disposition to ape the palaces and courts of the “effete monarchies,” yet our private residences, and even flats, approach nearer to the ideal than do the gloomy houses upon that most aristocratic block, Carlton House Terrace.

The real fault with our apartment houses has been overlooked. It is in their susceptibility to, and danger from fire. Who ever heard of a Parisian flat being destroyed by fire? And yet with our superior advantages, our facilities, our intelligent application of what is useful, we yearly construct furnaces and death-traps, and find those among our population who will pay extravagant rents to immolate themselves therein. It is nothing short of murder to erect houses eight to ten stories tall, put twenty families in them, and leave them to their fate, every one of the twenty families liable to destruction by the carelessness or viciousness of a child or an adult, upon some one of the floors. Fire-escapes are adapted only to acrobats and gymnasts; it would be an

## THE INCREASE OF LUXURIES IN GLASS AND CHINA.

How much the million are indebted for the luxury in glass and china to the present generation! Many are now living who remember that glass was usually entirely absent from the furnishings of the artisan's or laborer's dwelling; when his drinking cup was common earthenware, both in his home as well as at his tavern; when his salt was in a cup of the same material. His window was glazed with small panes, the frames of which were of the narrowest dimensions; indeed the only glass he ever saw was probably in his windows, and very often these were the centres from the flashed glass, obstructing nearly as much light as they admitted. Sometimes his little homestead was burnt down by the concentrated rays of the sun upon these rundles. How singular fashion should have re-introduced what necessity made compulsory! A water-bottle and glass were the luxury of the well-to-do only, and a wine glass, if by chance it was wanted at a wedding or a christening, was generally borrowed from some well-to-do neighbor, to drink health and happiness from beverages now almost forgotten, such as mead, cowslip, currant or other home-made yet palatable wines, for, be it remembered, in those days no tradesman sold these so-called home-made abominations. The bedroom of most artisans now boasts of a decent printed ewer and basin, when fifty years ago the most they had was a rough

is useful for decorating silk, linen, cotton, leather and other fabrics, adapted for fancy work, such as toilet and sofa cushions, table covers, brackets, hand and banner screens, d'oyleys, etc., etc. These ornaments have not yet made their appearance in this country, but are for sale by The Patent Silk Ornament Company, Finsbury House, 13a Finsbury Square, London.

**Patent Tynecastle Tapestry** is a new decorative material, the invention of Mr. Scott Morton; it has a surface of embossed flax, backed with strong paper, and is so prepared as to hang, like ordinary wall paper, in large sheets or panels. In the embossing, the texture of the canvas is retained to help the decorative effect, in giving a delicate play of light and shadow over the surface, in contrast to smooth hard-looking surfaces. Examples of this fabric were shown in dyed flax, which, with fine glazes of color, gave great variety of effect. This new material promises to be another help to producing charming interior effects for wall surface, and has great capabilities for decoration.

**An ordinary Mantel** in a friend's house, has been painted in imitation of terra cotta and the effect is beautiful—despite the fact that it is an imitation. The fine grain in the stone is retained and made richer, while the carving is brought into stronger relief. The coloring is done with a warm dye and while the marble is heated by a bright fire.